

Conversation Contents

Interior Cabinet Affairs report for 7/21/17

Attachments:

/1. Interior Cabinet Affairs report for 7/21/17/1.1 DOI DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS 7-21-17.docx

"Domenech, Douglas" <douglas_domenech@ios.doi.gov>

From: "Domenech, Douglas" <douglas_domenech@ios.doi.gov>
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To:
Subject: Interior Cabinet Affairs report for 7/21/17
Attachments: DOI DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS 7-21-17.docx

Attached and copied below.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS – 7/21/17

Doug Domenech, Senior Advisor

Lori Mashburn, White House Liaison

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MADE IN AMERICA VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnP854sChGo>

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Status of the Secretary

TODAY: The Secretary is in Colorado.

CO Area/Regional Leadership Meeting & Luncheon.

Tour USGS Core Research Center

Tour USGS TRIGA Nuclear Reactor

Denver Area DOI All Hands Meeting

Colorado Republican Committee Round Table

Remarks at Western Conservative Summit.

SATURDAY:

Meeting with Rocky Mountain National Park Superintendent

Return Travel.

NEXT WEEK:

Sunday: DC

Monday: WV. Boy Scouts POTUS event, potential D.C. mayor tour

Tuesday: Ohio American Heroes POTUS event.

Wednesday: DC-->El Paso, TX

Thursday: Las Cruces, NM

Friday: Las Cruces, NM

Saturday: Santa Fe, NM / Sabinoso Wilderness

NOTE: the Secretary will be on personal leave August 5-19 out of the country.

Media TODAY

MONUMENT REVIEW: SECRETARY ZINKE RECOMMENDS NO MODIFICATIONS TO CANYONS OF THE ANCIENTS

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke announced Colorado's Canyons of the Ancients National Monument is no longer under review and that he will recommend that no modifications be made to the monument. The monuments were under review in accordance with [President Donald J. Trump's April 26, 2017, executive order](#). The recommendation comes after review of public comments and conversations with stakeholders.

"When the President and I began the monument review process we absolutely realized that not all monuments are the same and that not all monuments would require modifications. Today I'm announcing that Canyon of the Ancients National Monument review process has concluded and I am recommending no changes be made to the monument," **said Secretary Zinke**. "Canyons of the Ancients is gorgeous land, but its monument status as the most high-density Native American archaeological sites in the Nation is clear. The history at this site spans thousands of years, and the federal protection of these objects and history will help us preserve this site for a thousand more years."

RECLAMATION ANNOUNCES GRANTS FOR WATERSMART SMALL-SCALE WATER EFFICIENCY PROJECTS IN 15 STATES

\$3.6 MILLION IN RECLAMATION GRANTS WILL BE LEVERAGED WITH LOCAL AND STATE FUNDING TO SUPPORT \$7.47 MILLION IN EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECTS

WASHINGTON –The Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Reclamation announced today that it has selected 57 Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects in 15 states to receive a total of \$3.6 million as part of the WaterSMART grants program. The WaterSMART grants are leveraged with local and state funding to support \$7.47 million in efficiency improvements.

INTERIOR PROVIDES \$409,885 TO GUAM TO MITIGATE INFESTATIONS OF THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE AND LITTLE FIRE ANT; PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 21, 2017) – Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula made available \$409,885 to preserve natural and cultural resources and protect against invasive species on Guam.

“We are especially pleased that Congress was able to provide some extra funding in FY 2017 to mitigate and control the coconut rhinoceros beetle and little fire ant on Guam,” said Pula. “All funding supports Governor Eddie Calvo’s efforts in protecting Guam’s natural resources now and for the future.”

INTERIOR PROVIDES \$189,881 TO NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS TO DEVELOP STAFF IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT; TEACH YOUTH IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION; STRENGTHEN EFFORTS TO CLEAN UP GARAPAN WATERSHED FY 2017 GRANTS PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 21, 2017) – This week Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula has made available \$189,881 for natural and cultural resource protection in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

“We are pleased to support Governor Ralph Torres’s team in shoring up management plans and prioritize efforts around natural resource protection,” said Pula. “We are also pleased to support a non-governmental organization that is working towards the same goals by training youth. All efforts are critical to the future of the CNMI.”

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INTERIOR PROVIDES \$103,000 TO THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS TO MANAGE AND MITIGATE HARMFUL RED ALGAE ON CORALS AND SUPPORT REEF RESPONSIBLE SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD INITIATIVE

FY 2017 GRANTS PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 21, 2017) – Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula made available \$103,000 for natural and cultural resource protection in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI).

“We are pleased to support Governor Kenneth Mapp and his administration in their efforts to protect the coral reef and viability of seafood resources in the U.S. Virgin Islands,” said Pula. “These projects will help Virgin Islanders protect their unique resources by addressing some of the current threats.”

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INTERIOR PROVIDES \$635,885 FOR NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION IN MICRONESIA REGION

Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula has made available \$635,885 for natural and cultural resource protection for all U.S. island jurisdictions in the Micronesia region.

“It is reassuring to see the range of initiatives we have been able to support with this funding, from managing fisheries that support people’s livelihoods to suppressing the impacts of the damaging Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle and Little Fire Ant,” said Pula. “We are happy to support and bolster the collaborative efforts of conservation-minded leaders across the Micronesia region.”

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INTERIOR PROVIDES \$94,906 TO AMERICAN SAMOA TO PROTECT CORAL REEFS, WATERSHEDS; BUILD CAPACITY IN GIS MAPPING, RADAR SURVEILLANCE FY 2017 GRANTS PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 21, 2017) – Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula made available \$94,906 for natural and cultural resource protection in American Samoa.

“We are pleased to support Governor Lolo Moliga and the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources team in their efforts to preserve natural ecosystems vital to American Samoa’s environment and the people’s livelihood,” said Pula. “American Samoa’s natural resources are highly vulnerable to the impacts of land-based pollution, illegal near-shore fishing and changes in climate for which this funding is greatly needed.”

DOI COMMS REPORT

Press Inquiries:

- Many logistical and small inquires.
- Washington Post, The Hill, NPR, others - REQUEST-- Writing today on Joel Clement and his "whistleblower" OpEd. I'd like to speak to someone at DOI for a response to his allegations and also comment about the wisdom of reassigning various senior personnel to positions for which their expertise does not appear relevant. Can you help me with that?-- RESPONSE- Regarding the op-ed: The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter. Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI: The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees. The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs,

policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.

· Reuters - REQUEST-- I'm inquiring about the process of NEPA. Specifically whether Border Patrol is adhering to protocols of NEPA compliance regarding the recent announcement of a border wall to be built at the Santa Ana NWR.—RESPONSE-- The Department of the Interior (DOI) is one of several federal agencies that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has engaged with to implement the President's Executive Order (EO) 13767 - Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements. CBP has included DOI in initial discussions regarding the implementation of the EO in south Texas. For inquiries, please contact U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Office of Public Affairs at cbpmediarelations@cbp.dhs.gov

· NY Times – REQUEST - 1. Is there a date for when Secretary Zinke will make his official recommendation to the President re Bears Ears? If so, what is it, and if not, why not and what is the time frame being considered? 2. How does DOI respond to the charge that there is no legal precedent for changing the designation of a national monument? 3. Given how much the outdoor rec industry contributes to the economy, what is the rationale for reducing the size of Bears Ears? 4. Do you feel the outdoor rec industry is being unreasonable in considering the reduction of Bears Ears? How have the conversations gone?—RESPONSE- - 1. The formal review period lasts 120 days (ends August 24), which is outlined in the executive order. There is not a mandated date for announcing recommendations. Two monuments that are no longer under review were announced last week. 2. Monuments have been modified by presidents on a number of occasions by both republican and democrat administrations. Furthermore, it's important to note that the Administration and Congress will work together on land management decisions. Using Bears Ears as an example, the Secretary recommended that Congress take action to set aside land as a national recreation area and also to officially establish Tribal co-management (co-management can only be granted by Congress, not the executive branch). 3. There is absolutely no reduction in the amount of public land. The land was federal land before the monument designation and if the boundaries of the monument are modified, the land would still be public land, managed by the agency that previously managed it. In the example of Bears Ears the land is managed by the Bureau of Land Management even if the land was not designated a monument it would still be managed by the BLM. Recreation and access to public lands is a major pillar of the Secretary's policy agenda and recreation will always be a major part of public lands under this administration. 4. See previous answer. The Department has had dozens of conversations with various outdoor recreation industry representatives and has heard a number of different sides of the issue from these stakeholders. The one thing that everyone agrees with the Secretary on though is that public access and outdoor recreation is a top priority.

· Reuters – REQUEST - Am working on a story for Reuters in which enviros allege the attached memo from Dep Sec Virginia Johnson shows Interior is seeking to reverse regs that prohibit, among other things, spotlighting and baiting tied to hunting on national preserve lands in Alaska. Would you kindly: 1. confirm the memo is authentic; and 2. provide or decline comment on enviros' claims? – RESPONSE – tbd....

Top Stories

- Washington Post: I'm a scientist. I'm blowing the whistle on the Trump Administration
- Alaska Dispatch News: Trump names Alaskan to Interior Department post
- Washington Post: Agency works to deliver on Trump's energy industry campaign promises

Top Issues and Accomplishments

Interior is announcing new hires this week, with press releases going out on a case-by-case basis.

Interior Secretary Zinke Applauds Nomination of Alaska's Joe Balash as Assistant Secretary for Land and Mineral

Today, Secretary Zinke is traveling to Denver to visit the DOI office and speak to employees.

Zinke will speak at the American Legislative Exchange Council, and the Western Conservative Summit. Topics at both events will include deregulation, energy, being a good land manager, federalism.

On Saturday, Secretary Zinke will tour Rocky Mountain National Park, and hold a media availability that afternoon. He will announce \$30 million in Centennial Challenge grants with matching funds for national parks across the country.

Secretarial-level Announcements/Events/Interviews

- Next Monday the Secretary will join POTUS in WV at the Boy Scout Jamboree and then a potential D.C. mayor tour. Tuesday: Ohio POTUS event. Wednesday he will start his monument tour of New Mexico and then Nevada.
- July 18: Department-level Release: DOI/NPS announce Outdoor Legacy Partnership grant package – \$13.3 Million for Improvements to Local Parks and Recreation in underserved communities
- July 22: Department-level Release: Secretary Zinke to announce that \$48 million through the Centennial Challenge Project in high priority maintenance and infrastructure projects at 42 parks in 29 states. Congress provided \$17.7 million for the projects as part of the program which will be matched by \$30.9 million from more than 50 park partners to improve trails, restore buildings, and increase visitor access to parks.

National Park Service

- July 21: National NPS Release: NPS announces new regional director for Northeast Region.
- July 24: Local NPS Release: Denali National Park will issue an environmental assessment on Milepost 231 Wayside and Trail Connections. This project for parking, trailheads, and a new trail connection is the NPS portion of a partnership with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Federal Highways Administration to enhance safety for pedestrians and other non-motorists in the area in conjunction with a bridge replacement over the Nenana River.
- Week of July 24: Local NPS Release: The Reconstruction Era National Monument will hold three public listening sessions (not related to July 28 Reconstruction Era Theme Study) in Beaufort, Port Royal, and St. Helena Island, South Carolina, as part of the development of a foundation document for this new park. Targeted stakeholder meetings will also be held in the respective communities during the day to identify the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the National Park Service in setting up these new areas and also provide input into the development of the foundation document and interpretive themes.
- July 25: Local NPS Release: The National Park Service will announce a 30-day public comment period on the Glacier National Park Lake McDonald Properties Management Plan Environmental Assessment (EA). Following the public review and comment period, the park will

prepare a formal decision document. The EA analyzes alternatives to manage NPS-owned properties, including buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, adjacent to Lake McDonald. The proposed alternative uses an adaptive approach that identifies a sequence of management options for each property, which for most properties begins with historic leasing, park or concessioner use, or stabilization of properties. The last option in the adaptive management approach would be removal of buildings. The management plan has garnered local media and public interest with little to no controversy and a lot of interest in leasing the properties.

- TBD: National NPS Release: NPS announcement of annual Rutgers report on NPS Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program economic impact. Tax credits 2016 contributed \$12.3 billion in output to the U.S. economy, added \$6.2 billion in GDP. Historic preservation tax incentives encourage investments in historic preservation and revitalization of communities small and large across the country.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- July TBD: National FWS Release: FWS will announce it has apportioned \$50 million to state fish and wildlife agencies for developing and implementing programs that benefit wildlife and their habitats. The funding is provided through the FWS's State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program and is distributed through an apportionment formula in accordance with the Appropriations Act.

- July TBD: FWS will deliver to the Federal Register, a final rule establishing the 2017-18 hunting seasons and bag limits for certain migratory game birds to fulfill our responsibilities to the four international conventions to protect and manage migratory game birds. A prepared statement will be provided on our website with a link to the proposed rule.

- July TBD: FWS will deliver to the Federal Register, a proposal to establish annual hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds for the 2018-19 hunting season to fulfill our responsibilities to the four international conventions to protect and manage migratory game birds. A prepared statement will be provided on our website with a link to the proposed rule.

- July TBD: National FWS Release: FWS will deliver to the Federal Register, a proposal to approve the shot for hunting waterfowl and coots. FWS has concluded that this type of shot left in the terrestrial or aquatic environments is unlikely to adversely affect fish, wildlife, or their habitats. Approving this shot formulation would increase the nontoxic shot options for hunters. Interested stakeholders include the Flyway Councils, state wildlife agencies, non-governmental organizations and hunters.

- TBD: FWS Local Release: FWS plans to announce the notice of availability of the revised draft recovery plan for the giant garter snake in California. There may be some controversy with cost estimates associated with this plan.

Bureau of Land Management

- July 24: BLM-AZ will meet with young leaders from 19 African countries who are part of the State Department's Mandela Fellowship to discuss public land issues and challenges.

- Week of July 24: Local BLM Release: BLM-CO Little Snake Field Office will announce a 30-day public scoping period for an environmental assessment evaluating a coal Lease by Application (LBA) from Peabody Energy's Twentymile Coal Foidel Creek Mine near Hayden. The LBA is for 640 acres of federal coal underneath private surface. The coal would be mined by underground methods with no surface disturbance. The mine estimates it could recover 4.1 million tons of coal, generating approximately \$13 million in royalties, half of which would go to the state. The lease would help the mine continue to employ 365 people.

- July 18 and 25: Local BLM Release: BLM-Eastern States, in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service, will hold public meetings in St. Paul, MN, and Virginia, MN, to solicit comments

regarding the proposed 20-year withdrawal of 234,328 acres of Federal minerals from national forest system lands on the Superior National Forest within the Rainy River Watershed. Public comments received during project scoping will inform development of an EIS to study the proposed mineral withdrawal.

- July 21 -26: The sage-grouse task force team comprised of BLM, USGS, USFWS, USFS, and Western Governors' offices will work in four subgroups to review a draft plan in response to S.O. 3353. The subgroups pertain to plan and policy review, fire and invasive species, data and science and wildlife management.
- July 25 – 26: Local BLM Release: BLM-WY Pinedale and Rock Springs field offices will hold two open houses to discuss the Normally Pressured Lance Natural Gas Development Project with local communities. Public comments will be collected on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement released last week.
- July 26: BLM acting Deputy Director for Operations John Ruhs will attend the Nevada Sheriffs' Association meeting and provide a "BLM 101" presentation.
- July 26: BLM-AK will participate in the annual Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) forum, focusing on issues that relate to potential sites within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and contaminated lands and mine sites in Alaska.
- July 26: BLM-CA Bishop Field Office will meet with representatives from Mono County, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and a private landowner to discuss riparian habitat improvement for bi-state sage-grouse through alterations in county road maintenance and installation of culverts and drainage dips.

Bureau of Reclamation

- July 20 or 21: BOR National Release: BOR announces \$3.6 Million for WaterSMART small-scale efficiency projects in 15 western states.
- July 24-25: Reclamation will meet with stakeholders in Klamath Falls, Oregon, to kick off the stakeholder engagement process on the reinitiated ESA consultation on Klamath Project Operations. Organizations expected to attend the meeting include U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, Yurok Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Hoopa Valley Tribe, The Klamath Tribes, Klamath Water Users Association, and PacifiCorps.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

- July 26 (tent.): BOEM Note to Stakeholders: Notice to Stakeholders on the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Cape Wind Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).
- TBD: BOEM Note to Stakeholders: Note to Stakeholders on Information Transfer Meeting to be held in New Orleans August 22-24.

Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

- July 21: BSEE News Brief: Made in America Week article will highlight jobs in the U.S. supported by OCS production.

Office of Insular Affairs

- July 25: Hearing before the House Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs, regarding the LBJ Hospital in American Samoa.
- July 25 or 26: Local IA Release: Marshall Islands grants release announces Compact

Infrastructure \$149,436; Ebeye Special Needs \$300,000; Health Care Program for four Atolls (Sec 177) \$697,387.

CONGRESSIONAL

N/A

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Political Appointee Update

DOI's politicals on board = 45

5 awaiting confirmation.

Deputy Secretary nominee David Bernhardt is expected to be voted on in the Senate on Monday.

Nominees Combs, Berman, and Domenech participated in a Senate hearing on Thursday.

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Speaking Invitations

Accepted

7/21 - Western Conservative Summit (Denver, CO)

7/22-29 National Monument Review Tour Nevada and New Mexico

8/5-20 Personal

Outstanding Invitations in Process

8/22 - 2017 Lake Tahoe Summit invited by Sen. Feinstein and Sen. Heller (Lake Tahoe, CA)

8/25-26 - Steamboat Institute's 9th Annual Freedom Conference & Festival (Steamboat Springs, CO)

8/30 - West Virginia Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting (White Sulphur Springs, WV)

Declining

7/22 National Association of Counties Annual Conference (Columbus, OH) (NOTE: declining for S-1 but offering a surrogate)

7/23-26 - Aspen Institute Forum on Global Energy, Economy, and Security (Aspen, CO)

7/23 National Boy Scout Jamboree (Glen Jean, WV)

7/31-8/2 - FBI National Academy Associates Annual Training Conference (DC)

8/2 - American Legion Northwest Regional Baseball Tournament's Opening Ceremony General Welcome (Missoula, MT)

8/5 - Glacier National Park Conservancy remarks at Annual Backpacker's Ball

(Whitefish/Kalispell)

8/17 - Mineral Hill Conservation Project (Gardiner, MT)

8/18 - Council of State Governments-West State and Federal Relations Committee (Tacoma, WA)

8/21 - Gage County Tourism and Beatrice Chamber of Commerce (Beatrice, NE)

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Emergency Management

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reports that several National Wildlife Refuges were affected by a round of severe thunderstorms that produced tornadoes and localized flooding in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Cumulative rain totals in some areas are as high as 10 inches. The Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, Trempleau NWR, LaCrosse District, Upper Mississippi River NWR, and McGregor District, Upper Mississippi River NWR were affected, with the McGregor District lending clean-up support to the town of McGregor. The Winona District, Upper Mississippi River NWR assisted in search and rescue efforts along the river. All employees have been accounted for, though some employee homes are reportedly damaged.

USGS deployed five crews to collect high flow measurements in southwestern Wisconsin. The main rivers affected are the Kickapoo, Trempealeau, Baraboo, Pecatonica, and LaCrosse.

In California, the Detwiler Fire, located in Mariposa County (CAL FIRE), has burned 70,596 (+22,596) acres and is 10 (+3)-percent contained. The fire is managed by a Type-1 Incident Management Team (IMT) with 3,737 (+562) personnel, including 68 (+32) DOI personnel. There are 1,500 (no change) residential structures threatened and 4,968 (no change) evacuees. The fire threatens the Mariposa Public Utility District water supply and critical communication infrastructure on Fremont Peak. Fifty residences have been destroyed. Full containment is expected on August 5.

In Lassen County, California, (BLM) the Long Valley Fire has burned 83,733 (no change) acres and is 91 (+20)-percent contained. The fire is managed by a Type-2 IMT with 489 (-187) personnel assigned, including 84 (-52) DOI personnel. There are 0 (-75) residential structures threatened. Containment is expected on July 25.

In Nevada, the Four Seasons Complex has burned 159,986 (+4,489) acres. The fire is 85 (+10)-percent contained and managed by a Type-2 IMT with 460 (-76) personnel assigned, including 60 (+6) DOI personnel. Fifteen (+15) responders associated with the Incident Command Post have been listed as injured due to flu-like symptoms. Full containment is expected on July 24.

The Grass Valley Fire in Pershing County, Nevada, (BLM) has burned 11,590 (no change) acres and is 88 (+38)-percent contained. The fire is managed by a Type-2 IMT with 230 (+31) personnel, including 59 (+18) DOI personnel. Full containment is expected on July 21.

Also, in Nevada, the MM155 Fire in Pershing County (BLM) has burned 22,360 acres and is 97-percent contained. The fire is managed by a Type-2 IMT with 41 personnel assigned, with no DOI personnel, and the fire is expected to be contained later today.

In South Dakota, the Wanblee Timber Fire in Jackson County (BIA) has burned 5,305 (no change) acres and is 78 (no change)-percent contained. The fire is currently managed by a Type-2 IMT with 44 (-129) personnel, including 17 (-10) DOI personnel. The Wanblee and Georgetown communities, as well as cultural sites, are threatened by the fire. There are 20 (no change) evacuees. One unoccupied residence has been destroyed. Full containment is expected on July 29.

Outside Media of Interest

Trump Administration Cancels Hundreds Of Obama-Era Regulations.

The Washington Post (7/20, Eilperin, Paletta) reports that OMB on Thursday described “how it would jettison hundreds of existing or planned regulations as part of its larger push to ease federal restrictions on the private sector.” The agency issued a list that “shows the extent to which this administration is determined to erase many of the Obama administration’s policy priorities.” In all, the Administration “said it was pulling or suspending 860 pending regulations” including 469 that “were being completely withdrawn” and 391 that were “being set aside or reevaluated.”

Interior Dept. Ordered Glacier Park Chief, Other Climate Expert Pulled From Zuckerberg Tour.

The Washington Post (7/20, Rein) reports that days before Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg’s visit to Glacier National Park on Saturday “to tour the melting ice fields that have become the poster child for climate change’s effects on Montana’s northern Rockies,” the Trump Administration “abruptly removed two of the park’s top climate experts from a delegation scheduled to show him around, telling a research ecologist and the park superintendent that they were no longer going to participate in the tour.” The Post calls the “decision to micromanage” Zuckerberg’s visit “highly unusual – even for a celebrity visit,” and points out that the Facebook founder, along “with the broader tech community in Silicon Valley has positioned himself as a vocal critic of President Trump.”

Dem To Seek Investigation Into Interior Staff Reassignments.

The Hill (7/20, Cama) reports that Sen. Maria Cantwell “wants an investigation into an Interior Department employee’s claim that he was reassigned due to his work on climate change.” Cantwell “said at a Thursday hearing that she would officially ask Interior’s inspector general to look into the matter.” Cantwell’s “request came a day after Joel Clement, the former director of Interior’s Office of Policy Analysis, wrote a Washington Post op-ed saying he was improperly reassigned to an accounting position because of his work on helping Alaskan communities cope with climate change.”

Alaskan Joe Balash Nominated For Senior Interior Department Post.

The Fairbanks (AK) News-Miner (7/20, Friedman) reports that the Interior Department “announced Thursday that President Donald Trump intends to nominate Joe Balash to serve as the department’s Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management.” Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said, “It’s been a long time since the Department had an Assistant Secretary from Alaska, and the president’s nomination of Joe Balash further proves his commitment to Alaska and rural America as a whole. Joe is no stranger to the Department of the Interior having worked alongside the department on a number of projects in Alaska. He brings an incredible combination of state and federal experience to the table, and he will be very effective in helping the department work with Congress to do the work of the American people. I look forward to his speedy confirmation in the Senate.”

NC Governor On Trump Drilling Plan: ‘Not Off Our Coast’.

The AP (7/12) reports that “under pressure from President Donald Trump, North Carolina’s governor announced his opposition on Thursday to drilling for natural gas and oil off the Atlantic coast, saying it poses too much of a threat to the state’s beaches and tourism economy.” Ahead of “a Friday deadline for comment from elected officials on the Trump administration’s request for companies to perform seismic testing under Atlantic waters, Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper held a news conference at a coastal state park to announce he’ll be registering the state’s opposition.” Cooper said, “There is a threat looming over this coastline that we love and the prosperity it brings, and that’s the threat of offshore drilling.” He continued, “As governor, I’m here to speak out and take action against it. I can sum it up in four words: ‘not off our coast.’”

House Clears Path For Alaska’s Long-awaited King Cove Road.

The Washington Times (7/20, Wolfgang) reports that the House of Representatives passed 248 to 179 a bill authorizing a “massive land swap” between the state of Alaska and the federal government that would allow for the construction of a road connecting King Cove, Alaska – an isolated community accessible only by water or air – to nearby Cold Bay. Under the legislation, tens of thousands of acres of state land would be exchanged for several hundred acres of the Izembek Wildlife Refuge, through which the road would run. President Trump “appears ready and willing” to sign the bill.

Federal Register Listings

Items cleared for the FR on Thursday.

REG0007192 BIA Indian Gaming; Extension of Tribal-State Class III Gaming Compact (Rosebud Sioux Tribe and State of South Dakota). This Notice announces the extension of a Class III gaming compact between the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and the State of South Dakota by written agreement of the parties. The extension is from July 31, 2017, to January 28, 2018. Notice 07/20/2017.

REG0007194 BIA Indian Gaming; Approval of an Amendment to a Tribal-State Class III Gaming Compact in the State of Washington. This Notice announces the approval of the Fifth Amendment to the Tribal State Compact for the Class III Gaming between the Squaxin Island Tribe of the Squaxin Island Reservation and the State of Washington. Notice 07/20/2017.

REG0007183 NPS Agency Information Collection Activities: Procedures for State, Tribal, and Local Plans and Grants. This Notice, under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), announces that the NPS will ask the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to renew its approval of an information collection for the National Historic Preservation Partnership (NHPP) Program and Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grants. The NPS is requesting public comments on the proposed information collection for 60 days. Notice 07/20/2017.

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WOLF TRAP

Tickets in the Secretary's box available. Please share with WH staff.

7-22-17	The Legend of Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses	8:30 PM
7-23-17	Rebelution	6:30 PM
7-25-17	Diana Ross	8:00 PM

Doug Domenech
Senior Advisor
US Department of the Interior

NOTE: *Every email I send or receive is subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act.*

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Return Travel.

NEXT WEEK:

Sunday: DC

Monday: WV. Boy Scouts POTUS event, potential D.C. mayor tour

Tuesday: Ohio American Heroes POTUS event.

Wednesday: DC-->El Paso, TX

Thursday: Las Cruces, NM

Friday: Las Cruces, NM

Saturday: Santa Fe, NM / Sabinoso Wilderness

NOTE: the Secretary will be on personal leave August 5-19 out of the country.

Media TODAY

MONUMENT REVIEW: SECRETARY ZINKE RECOMMENDS NO MODIFICATIONS TO CANYONS OF THE ANCIENTS

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke announced Colorado’s Canyons of the Ancients National Monument is no longer under review and that he will recommend that no modifications be made to the monument. The monuments were under review in accordance with [President Donald J. Trump’s April 26, 2017, executive order](#). The recommendation comes after review of public comments and conversations with stakeholders.

“When the President and I began the monument review process we absolutely realized that not all monuments are the same and that not all monuments would require modifications. Today I’m announcing that Canyon of the Ancients National Monument review process has concluded and I am recommending no changes be made to the monument,” **said Secretary Zinke**. “Canyons of the Ancients is gorgeous land, but its monument status as the most high-density Native American archaeological sites in the Nation is clear. The history at this site spans thousands of years, and the federal protection of these objects and history will help us preserve this site for a thousand more years.”

RECLAMATION ANNOUNCES GRANTS FOR WATERSMART SMALL-SCALE WATER EFFICIENCY PROJECTS IN 15 STATES

\$3.6 MILLION IN RECLAMATION GRANTS WILL BE LEVERAGED WITH LOCAL AND STATE FUNDING TO SUPPORT \$7.47 MILLION IN EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECTS

WASHINGTON –The Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Reclamation announced today that it has selected 57 Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects in 15 states to receive a total of \$3.6 million as part of the WaterSMART grants program. The WaterSMART grants are leveraged with local and state funding to support \$7.47 million in efficiency improvements.

INTERIOR PROVIDES \$409,885 TO GUAM TO MITIGATE INFESTATIONS OF THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE AND LITTLE FIRE ANT; PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 21, 2017) – Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula made available \$409,885 to preserve natural and cultural resources and protect against invasive species on Guam.

“We are especially pleased that Congress was able to provide some extra funding in FY 2017 to mitigate and control the coconut rhinoceros beetle and little fire ant on Guam,” said Pula. “All funding supports Governor Eddie Calvo’s efforts in protecting Guam’s natural resources now and for the future.”

INTERIOR PROVIDES \$189,881 TO NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS TO DEVELOP STAFF IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT; TEACH YOUTH IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION; STRENGTHEN EFFORTS TO CLEAN UP GARAPAN WATERSHED FY 2017 GRANTS PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 21, 2017) – This week Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula has made available \$189,881 for natural and cultural resource protection in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

“We are pleased to support Governor Ralph Torres’s team in shoring up management plans and prioritize efforts around natural resource protection,” said Pula. “We are also pleased to support a non-governmental organization that is working towards the same goals by training youth. All efforts are critical to the future of the CNMI.”

INTERIOR PROVIDES \$103,000 TO THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS TO MANAGE AND MITIGATE HARMFUL RED ALGAE ON CORALS AND SUPPORT REEF RESPONSIBLE SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD INITIATIVE FY 2017 GRANTS PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 21, 2017) – Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula made available \$103,000 for natural and cultural resource protection in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI).

“We are pleased to support Governor Kenneth Mapp and his administration in their efforts to protect the coral reef and viability of seafood resources in the U.S. Virgin Islands,” said Pula. “These projects will help Virgin Islanders protect their unique resources by addressing some of the current threats.”

INTERIOR PROVIDES \$635,885 FOR NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION IN MICRONESIA REGION

Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula has made available \$635,885 for natural and cultural resource protection for all U.S. island jurisdictions in the Micronesia region.

“It is reassuring to see the range of initiatives we have been able to support with this funding, from managing fisheries that support people’s livelihoods to suppressing the impacts of the damaging

Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle and Little Fire Ant,” said Pula. “We are happy to support and bolster the collaborative efforts of conservation-minded leaders across the Micronesia region.”

INTERIOR PROVIDES \$94,906 TO AMERICAN SAMOA TO PROTECT CORAL REEFS, WATERSHEDS; BUILD CAPACITY IN GIS MAPPING, RADAR SURVEILLANCE FY 2017 GRANTS PROTECT NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 21, 2017) – Interior Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Nikolao Pula made available \$94,906 for natural and cultural resource protection in American Samoa.

“We are pleased to support Governor Lolo Moliga and the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources team in their efforts to preserve natural ecosystems vital to American Samoa’s environment and the people’s livelihood,” said Pula. “American Samoa’s natural resources are highly vulnerable to the impacts of land-based pollution, illegal near-shore fishing and changes in climate for which this funding is greatly needed.”

DOI COMMS REPORT

Press Inquiries:

- Many logistical and small inquires.
- Washington Post, The Hill, NPR, others - REQUEST-- Writing today on Joel Clement and his "whistleblower" OpEd. I'd like to speak to someone at DOI for a response to his allegations and also comment about the wisdom of reassigning various senior personnel to positions for which their expertise does not appear relevant. Can you help me with that?--RESPONSE- Regarding the op-ed: The Department does not comment on ongoing matters such as whistleblower complaints. We look forward to working with the Office of Special Counsel to address any questions they might have about this matter. Regarding the shuffling of SES at DOI: The President signed an executive order to reorganize the federal government for the future and the Secretary has been absolutely out front on that issue. In fact, he mentioned a Department-wide, front lines-focused reorganization on his first day address to all employees. The purpose of the Senior Executive Service is to ensure that the executive management of the government of the United States is responsive to the needs, policies, and goals of the Nation and otherwise is of the highest quality. Senior executives are the highest paid employees in the federal government and signed up for the SES knowing that they could be called upon to work in different positions at any time. Congress meant for the SES to be a mobile force that are capable of taking on different assignments to meet the needs of the agency. Personnel moves among the Senior Executive Service are being conducted to better serve the taxpayer and the Department's operations.
- Reuters - REQUEST-- I’m inquiring about the process of NEPA. Specifically whether Border Patrol is adhering to protocols of NEPA compliance regarding the recent announcement of a border wall to be built at the Santa Ana NWR.—RESPONSE-- The Department of the Interior (DOI) is one of several federal agencies that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has engaged with to implement the President’s Executive Order (EO) 13767 - Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements. CBP has included DOI in initial discussions regarding the implementation of the EO in south Texas. For inquiries, please contact U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s Office of Public Affairs at cbpmediarelations@cbp.dhs.gov
- NY Times – REQUEST - 1. Is there a date for when Secretary Zinke will make his official recommendation to the President re Bears Ears? If so, what is it, and if not, why not and what is the time frame being considered? 2. How does DOI respond to the charge that there is no legal precedent for changing the designation of a national monument? 3. Given how much the outdoor rec industry contributes to the economy, what is the rationale for reducing the size of Bears Ears? 4.

Do you feel the outdoor rec industry is being unreasonable in considering the reduction of Bears Ears? How have the conversations gone?—RESPONSE— 1. The formal review period lasts 120 days (ends August 24), which is outlined in the executive order. There is not a mandated date for announcing recommendations. Two monuments that are no longer under review were announced last week. 2. Monuments have been modified by presidents on a number of occasions by both republican and democrat administrations. Furthermore, it's important to note that the Administration and Congress will work together on land management decisions. Using Bears Ears as an example, the Secretary recommended that Congress take action to set aside land as a national recreation area and also to officially establish Tribal co-management (co-management can only be granted by Congress, not the executive branch). 3. There is absolutely no reduction in the amount of public land. The land was federal land before the monument designation and if the boundaries of the monument are modified, the land would still be public land, managed by the agency that previously managed it. In the example of Bears Ears the land is managed by the Bureau of Land Management even if the land was not designated a monument it would still be managed by the BLM. Recreation and access to public lands is a major pillar of the Secretary's policy agenda and recreation will always be a major part of public lands under this administration. 4. See previous answer. The Department has had dozens of conversations with various outdoor recreation industry representatives and has heard a number of different sides of the issue from these stakeholders. The one thing that everyone agrees with the Secretary on though is that public access and outdoor recreation is a top priority.

- Reuters – REQUEST - Am working on a story for Reuters in which enviros allege the attached memo from Dep Sec Virginia Johnson shows Interior is seeking to reverse regs that prohibit, among other things, spotlighting and baiting tied to hunting on national preserve lands in Alaska. Would you kindly: 1. confirm the memo is authentic; and 2. provide or decline comment on enviros' claims? – RESPONSE – tbd....

Top Stories

- Washington Post: I'm a scientist. I'm blowing the whistle on the Trump Administration
- Alaska Dispatch News: Trump names Alaskan to Interior Department post
- Washington Post: Agency works to deliver on Trump's energy industry campaign promises

Top Issues and Accomplishments

Interior is announcing new hires this week, with press releases going out on a case-by-case basis. Interior Secretary Zinke Applauds Nomination of Alaska's Joe Balash as Assistant Secretary for Land and Mineral

Today, Secretary Zinke is traveling to Denver to visit the DOI office and speak to employees. Zinke will speak at the American Legislative Exchange Council, and the Western Conservative Summit. Topics at both events will include deregulation, energy, being a good land manager, federalism. On Saturday, Secretary Zinke will tour Rocky Mountain National Park, and hold a media availability that afternoon. He will announce \$30 million in Centennial Challenge grants with matching funds for national parks across the country.

Secretarial-level Announcements/Events/Interviews

- Next Monday the Secretary will join POTUS in WV at the Boy Scout Jamboree and then a potential D.C. mayor tour. Tuesday: Ohio POTUS event. Wednesday he will start his monument tour of New Mexico and then Nevada.

- July 18: Department-level Release: DOI/NPS announce Outdoor Legacy Partnership grant package – \$13.3 Million for Improvements to Local Parks and Recreation in underserved communities
- July 22: Department-level Release: Secretary Zinke to announce that \$48 million through the Centennial Challenge Project in high priority maintenance and infrastructure projects at 42 parks in 29 states. Congress provided \$17.7 million for the projects as part of the program which will be matched by \$30.9 million from more than 50 park partners to improve trails, restore buildings, and increase visitor access to parks.

National Park Service

- July 21: National NPS Release: NPS announces new regional director for Northeast Region.
- July 24: Local NPS Release: Denali National Park will issue an environmental assessment on Milepost 231 Wayside and Trail Connections. This project for parking, trailheads, and a new trail connection is the NPS portion of a partnership with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Federal Highways Administration to enhance safety for pedestrians and other non-motorists in the area in conjunction with a bridge replacement over the Nenana River.
- Week of July 24: Local NPS Release: The Reconstruction Era National Monument will hold three public listening sessions (not related to July 28 Reconstruction Era Theme Study) in Beaufort, Port Royal, and St. Helena Island, South Carolina, as part of the development of a foundation document for this new park. Targeted stakeholder meetings will also be held in the respective communities during the day to identify the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the National Park Service in setting up these new areas and also provide input into the development of the foundation document and interpretive themes.
- July 25: Local NPS Release: The National Park Service will announce a 30-day public comment period on the Glacier National Park Lake McDonald Properties Management Plan Environmental Assessment (EA). Following the public review and comment period, the park will prepare a formal decision document. The EA analyzes alternatives to manage NPS-owned properties, including buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, adjacent to Lake McDonald. The proposed alternative uses an adaptive approach that identifies a sequence of management options for each property, which for most properties begins with historic leasing, park or concessioner use, or stabilization of properties. The last option in the adaptive management approach would be removal of buildings. The management plan has garnered local media and public interest with little to no controversy and a lot of interest in leasing the properties.
- TBD: National NPS Release: NPS announcement of annual Rutgers report on NPS Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program economic impact. Tax credits 2016 contributed \$12.3 billion in output to the U.S. economy, added \$6.2 billion in GDP. Historic preservation tax incentives encourage investments in historic preservation and revitalization of communities small and large across the country.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- July TBD: National FWS Release: FWS will announce it has apportioned \$50 million to state fish and wildlife agencies for developing and implementing programs that benefit wildlife and their habitats. The funding is provided through the FWS's State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program and is distributed through an apportionment formula in accordance with the Appropriations Act.
- July TBD: FWS will deliver to the Federal Register, a final rule establishing the 2017-18 hunting seasons and bag limits for certain migratory game birds to fulfill our responsibilities to the four international conventions to protect and manage migratory game birds. A prepared statement will be provided on our website with a link to the proposed rule.

- July TBD: FWS will deliver to the Federal Register, a proposal to establish annual hunting regulations for certain migratory game birds for the 2018-19 hunting season to fulfill our responsibilities to the four international conventions to protect and manage migratory game birds. A prepared statement will be provided on our website with a link to the proposed rule.
- July TBD: National FWS Release: FWS will deliver to the Federal Register, a proposal to approve the shot for hunting waterfowl and coots. FWS has concluded that this type of shot left in the terrestrial or aquatic environments is unlikely to adversely affect fish, wildlife, or their habitats. Approving this shot formulation would increase the nontoxic shot options for hunters. Interested stakeholders include the Flyway Councils, state wildlife agencies, non-governmental organizations and hunters.
- TBD: FWS Local Release: FWS plans to announce the notice of availability of the revised draft recovery plan for the giant garter snake in California. There may be some controversy with cost estimates associated with this plan.

Bureau of Land Management

- July 24: BLM-AZ will meet with young leaders from 19 African countries who are part of the State Department's Mandela Fellowship to discuss public land issues and challenges.
- Week of July 24: Local BLM Release: BLM-CO Little Snake Field Office will announce a 30-day public scoping period for an environmental assessment evaluating a coal Lease by Application (LBA) from Peabody Energy's Twentymile Coal Foidel Creek Mine near Hayden. The LBA is for 640 acres of federal coal underneath private surface. The coal would be mined by underground methods with no surface disturbance. The mine estimates it could recover 4.1 million tons of coal, generating approximately \$13 million in royalties, half of which would go to the state. The lease would help the mine continue to employ 365 people.
- July 18 and 25: Local BLM Release: BLM-Eastern States, in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service, will hold public meetings in St. Paul, MN, and Virginia, MN, to solicit comments regarding the proposed 20-year withdrawal of 234,328 acres of Federal minerals from national forest system lands on the Superior National Forest within the Rainy River Watershed. Public comments received during project scoping will inform development of an EIS to study the proposed mineral withdrawal.
- July 21 -26: The sage-grouse task force team comprised of BLM, USGS, USFWS, USFS, and Western Governors' offices will work in four subgroups to review a draft plan in response to S.O. 3353. The subgroups pertain to plan and policy review, fire and invasive species, data and science and wildlife management.
- July 25 – 26: Local BLM Release: BLM-WY Pinedale and Rock Springs field offices will hold two open houses to discuss the Normally Pressured Lance Natural Gas Development Project with local communities. Public comments will be collected on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement released last week.
- July 26: BLM acting Deputy Director for Operations John Ruhs will attend the Nevada Sheriffs' Association meeting and provide a "BLM 101" presentation.
- July 26: BLM-AK will participate in the annual Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) forum, focusing on issues that relate to potential sites within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and contaminated lands and mine sites in Alaska.
- July 26: BLM-CA Bishop Field Office will meet with representatives from Mono County, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and a private landowner to discuss riparian habitat improvement for bi-state sage-grouse through alterations in county road maintenance and installation of culverts and drainage dips.

Bureau of Reclamation

- July 20 or 21: BOR National Release: BOR announces \$3.6 Million for WaterSMART small-scale efficiency projects in 15 western states.
- July 24-25: Reclamation will meet with stakeholders in Klamath Falls, Oregon, to kick off the stakeholder engagement process on the reinitiated ESA consultation on Klamath Project Operations. Organizations expected to attend the meeting include U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, Yurok Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Hoopa Valley Tribe, The Klamath Tribes, Klamath Water Users Association, and PacifiCorps.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

- July 26 (tent.): BOEM Note to Stakeholders: Notice to Stakeholders on the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Cape Wind Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).
- TBD: BOEM Note to Stakeholders: Note to Stakeholders on Information Transfer Meeting to be held in New Orleans August 22-24.

Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement

- July 21: BSEE News Brief: Made in America Week article will highlight jobs in the U.S. supported by OCS production.

Office of Insular Affairs

- July 25: Hearing before the House Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs, regarding the LBJ Hospital in American Samoa.
- July 25 or 26: Local IA Release: Marshall Islands grants release announces Compact Infrastructure \$149,436; Ebeye Special Needs \$300,000; Health Care Program for four Atolls (Sec 177) \$697,387.

CONGRESSIONAL

N/A

Political Appointee Update

DOI's politicals on board = 45

5 awaiting confirmation.

Deputy Secretary nominee David Bernhardt is expected to be voted on in the Senate on Monday.

Nominees Combs, Berman, and Domenech participated in a Senate hearing on Thursday.

Speaking Invitations

Accepted

7/21 - Western Conservative Summit (Denver, CO)

7/22-29 National Monument Review Tour Nevada and New Mexico

8/5-20 Personal

Outstanding Invitations in Process

8/22 - 2017 Lake Tahoe Summit invited by Sen. Feinstein and Sen. Heller (Lake Tahoe, CA)

8/25-26 - Steamboat Institute's 9th Annual Freedom Conference & Festival (Steamboat Springs, CO)

8/30 - West Virginia Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting (White Sulphur Springs, WV)

Declining

7/22 National Association of Counties Annual Conference (Columbus, OH) (NOTE: declining for S-1 but offering a surrogate)
7/23-26 - Aspen Institute Forum on Global Energy, Economy, and Security (Aspen, CO)
7/23 National Boy Scout Jamboree (Glen Jean, WV)
7/31-8/2 - FBI National Academy Associates Annual Training Conference (DC)
8/2 - American Legion Northwest Regional Baseball Tournament's Opening Ceremony General Welcome (Missoula, MT)
8/5 - Glacier National Park Conservancy remarks at Annual Backpacker's Ball (Whitefish/Kalispell)
8/17 - Mineral Hill Conservation Project (Gardiner, MT)
8/18 - Council of State Governments-West State and Federal Relations Committee (Tacoma, WA)
8/21 - Gage County Tourism and Beatrice Chamber of Commerce (Beatrice, NE)

Emergency Management

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reports that several National Wildlife Refuges were affected by a round of severe thunderstorms that produced tornadoes and localized flooding in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Cumulative rain totals in some areas are as high as 10 inches. The Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, Trempleau NWR, LaCrosse District, Upper Mississippi River NWR, and McGregor District, Upper Mississippi River NWR were affected, with the McGregor District lending clean-up support to the town of McGregor. The Winona District, Upper Mississippi River NWR assisted in search and rescue efforts along the river. All employees have been accounted for, though some employee homes are reportedly damaged.

USGS deployed five crews to collect high flow measurements in southwestern Wisconsin. The main rivers affected are the Kickapoo, Trempealeau, Baraboo, Pecatonica, and LaCrosse.

In California, the Detwiler Fire, located in Mariposa County (CAL FIRE), has burned 70,596 (+22,596) acres and is 10 (+3)-percent contained. The fire is managed by a Type-1 Incident Management Team (IMT) with 3,737 (+562) personnel, including 68 (+32) DOI personnel. There are 1,500 (no change) residential structures threatened and 4,968 (no change) evacuees. The fire threatens the Mariposa Public Utility District water supply and critical communication infrastructure on Fremont Peak. Fifty residences have been destroyed. Full containment is expected on August 5.

In Lassen County, California, (BLM) the Long Valley Fire has burned 83,733 (no change) acres and is 91 (+20)-percent contained. The fire is managed by a Type-2 IMT with 489 (-187) personnel assigned, including 84 (-52) DOI personnel. There are 0 (-75) residential structures threatened. Containment is expected on July 25.

In Nevada, the Four Seasons Complex has burned 159,986 (+4,489) acres. The fire is 85 (+10)-percent contained and managed by a Type-2 IMT with 460 (-76) personnel assigned, including 60 (+6) DOI personnel. Fifteen (+15) responders associated with the Incident Command Post have been listed as injured due to flu-like symptoms. Full containment is expected on July 24.

The Grass Valley Fire in Pershing County, Nevada, (BLM) has burned 11,590 (no change) acres and is 88 (+38)-percent contained. The fire is managed by a Type-2 IMT with 230 (+31) personnel, including 59 (+18) DOI personnel. Full containment is expected on July 21.

Also, in Nevada, the MM155 Fire in Pershing County (BLM) has burned 22,360 acres and is 97-percent contained. The fire is managed by a Type-2 IMT with 41 personnel assigned, with no DOI personnel, and the fire is expected to be contained later today.

In South Dakota, the Wanblee Timber Fire in Jackson County (BIA) has burned 5,305 (no change) acres and is 78 (no change)-percent contained. The fire is currently managed by a Type-2 IMT with 44 (-129) personnel, including 17 (-10) DOI personnel. The Wanblee and Georgetown communities, as well as cultural sites, are threatened by the fire. There are 20 (no change) evacuees. One unoccupied residence has been destroyed. Full containment is expected on July 29.

Outside Media of Interest

Trump Administration Cancels Hundreds Of Obama-Era Regulations.

The Washington Post (7/20, Eilperin, Paletta) reports that OMB on Thursday described “how it would jettison hundreds of existing or planned regulations as part of its larger push to ease federal restrictions on the private sector.” The agency issued a list that “shows the extent to which this administration is determined to erase many of the Obama administration’s policy priorities.” In all, the Administration “said it was pulling or suspending 860 pending regulations” including 469 that “were being completely withdrawn” and 391 that were “being set aside or reevaluated.”

Interior Dept. Ordered Glacier Park Chief, Other Climate Expert Pulled From Zuckerberg Tour.

The Washington Post (7/20, Rein) reports that days before Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg’s visit to Glacier National Park on Saturday “to tour the melting ice fields that have become the poster child for climate change’s effects on Montana’s northern Rockies,” the Trump Administration “abruptly removed two of the park’s top climate experts from a delegation scheduled to show him around, telling a research ecologist and the park superintendent that they were no longer going to participate in the tour.” The Post calls the “decision to micromanage” Zuckerberg’s visit “highly unusual – even for a celebrity visit,” and points out that the Facebook founder, along “with the broader tech community in Silicon Valley has positioned himself as a vocal critic of President Trump.”

Dem To Seek Investigation Into Interior Staff Reassignments.

The Hill (7/20, Cama) reports that Sen. Maria Cantwell “wants an investigation into an Interior Department employee’s claim that he was reassigned due to his work on climate change.” Cantwell “said at a Thursday hearing that she would officially ask Interior’s inspector general to look into the matter.” Cantwell’s “request came a day after Joel Clement, the former director of Interior’s Office of Policy Analysis, wrote a Washington Post op-ed saying he was improperly reassigned to an accounting position because of his work on helping Alaskan communities cope with climate change.”

Alaskan Joe Balash Nominated For Senior Interior Department Post.

The Fairbanks (AK) News-Miner (7/20, Friedman) reports that the Interior Department “announced Thursday that President Donald Trump intends to nominate Joe Balash to serve as the department’s Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management.” Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said, “It’s been a long time since the Department had an Assistant Secretary from Alaska, and the president’s nomination of Joe Balash further proves his commitment to Alaska and rural America as a whole. Joe is no stranger to the Department of the Interior having worked alongside the department on a number of projects in Alaska. He brings an incredible combination of state and federal experience to the table, and he will be very effective in helping the department work with Congress to do the work of the American people. I look forward to his speedy confirmation in the Senate.”

NC Governor On Trump Drilling Plan: ‘Not Off Our Coast’.

The AP (7/12) reports that “under pressure from President Donald Trump, North Carolina’s governor announced his opposition on Thursday to drilling for natural gas and oil off the Atlantic coast, saying it poses too much of a threat to the state’s beaches and tourism economy.” Ahead of “a Friday deadline for comment from elected officials on the Trump administration’s request for companies to perform seismic testing under Atlantic waters, Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper held a news conference at a coastal state park to announce he’ll be registering the state’s opposition.” Cooper said, “There is a threat looming over this coastline that we love and the prosperity it brings, and that’s the threat of offshore drilling.” He continued, “As governor, I’m here to speak out and take action against it. I can sum it up in four words: ‘not off our coast.’”

House Clears Path For Alaska’s Long-awaited King Cove Road.

The Washington Times (7/20, Wolfgang) reports that the House of Representatives passed 248 to 179 a bill authorizing a “massive land swap” between the state of Alaska and the federal government that would allow for the construction of a road connecting King Cove, Alaska – an isolated community accessible only by water or air – to nearby Cold Bay. Under the legislation, tens of thousands of acres of state land would be exchanged for several hundred acres of the Izembek Wildlife Refuge, through which the road would run. President Trump “appears ready and willing” to sign the bill.

Federal Register Listings

Items cleared for the FR on Thursday.

REG0007192 BIA Indian Gaming; Extension of Tribal-State Class III Gaming Compact (Rosebud Sioux Tribe and State of South Dakota). This Notice announces the extension of a Class III gaming compact between the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and the State of South Dakota by written agreement of the parties. The extension is from July 31, 2017, to January 28, 2018. Notice 07/20/2017.

REG0007194 BIA Indian Gaming; Approval of an Amendment to a Tribal-State Class III Gaming Compact in the State of Washington. This Notice announces the approval of the Fifth Amendment to the Tribal State Compact for the Class III Gaming between the Squaxin Island Tribe of the Squaxin Island Reservation and the State of Washington. Notice 07/20/2017.

REG0007183 NPS Agency Information Collection Activities: Procedures for State, Tribal, and Local Plans and Grants. This Notice, under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), announces that the NPS will ask the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to renew its approval of an information collection for the National Historic Preservation Partnership (NHPP) Program and Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grants. The NPS is requesting public comments on the proposed information collection for 60 days. Notice 07/20/2017.

WOLF TRAP

Tickets in the Secretary’s box available. Please share with WH staff.

7-22-17	The Legend of Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses	8:30 PM
-23-17	Rebelution	6:30 PM
-25-17	Diana Ross	8:00 PM